

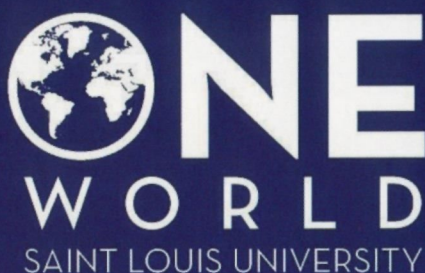


ONE WORLD



Spring 2019

Saint Louis University



Letter from the Editors

Dear Reader,

Thank you for picking up the Spring 2019 issue of OneWorld Magazine. We are thrilled to present this collection of stories, perspectives, and experiences.

Spring 2019
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We began our semester thinking about what stories we felt needed to be said. We established our point of departure: the opportunities, the challenges, and the precarity of being a young person in today's world. We outlined expectations placed upon us and how those expectations shape how we view ourselves. We took a magnifying glass to the challenges we face as a generation. We set out to demystify the status quo and all its implications. This magazine contains the research, interviews, and reflection of young people who desire higher purpose, agency, and fulfillment. We hope these stories challenge you, the young and the young at heart, to reflect, plan, and return to the world with renewed ambition.

OneWorld is not simply a magazine but a call to action. We hope that these stories transform you as much as they did us. We hope that they inspire you to question, research and get involved so that we can better recognize the worth in all of our neighbors, despite the injustices in society. "We yearn to remove the barriers of ignorance and injustice, because the most basic and unchanging truth that unites us is the infinite value of the human person."

With gratitude,

The Editorial Board

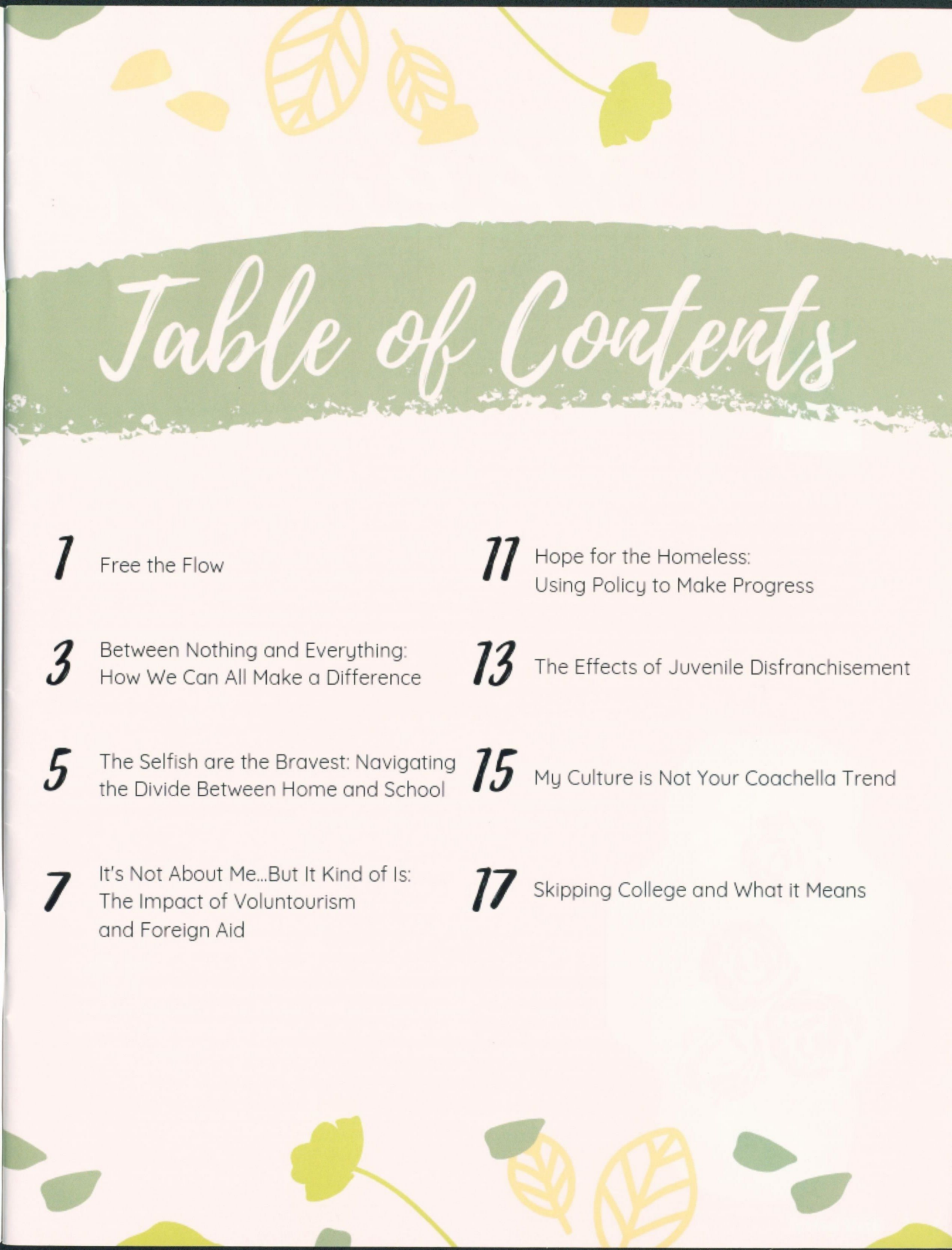


Table of Contents

- | | | | |
|----------|---|-----------|---|
| 1 | Free the Flow | 11 | Hope for the Homeless:
Using Policy to Make Progress |
| 3 | Between Nothing and Everything:
How We Can All Make a Difference | 13 | The Effects of Juvenile Disfranchisement |
| 5 | The Selfish are the Bravest: Navigating
the Divide Between Home and School | 15 | My Culture is Not Your Coachella Trend |
| 7 | It's Not About Me...But It Kind of Is:
The Impact of Voluntourism
and Foreign Aid | 17 | Skipping College and What it Means |

free the



Karan Modi
Freshman
Public Health

Saint Louis University (SLU) is the first university in the state of Missouri to offer free products to menstruators in our university community and the third Jesuit institution in the country to do so. Having access to menstrual products is extremely difficult and many factors play into why--but SLU is taking steps towards alleviating the pressures of inaccessibility for students who need menstrual products.

Availability of free menstrual products on campuses is a growing movement, initiated by the voices of this generation. Project Period is merely one of the many student-led missions that have gained recognition at the nationwide level through the determination and passion of young organizers.

So what is Project Period? Project Period is a student-led organization focused on removing hygiene barriers as well as educating everyone on what those barriers are. This is done by offering free menstrual products obtained from the company Aunt Flow, a menstruation product company with a mission to ensure everyone has access to quality menstrual products. In

2018, Project Period received funding from the Student Government Association Wellness Grant, and within a year, were able to begin regularly stocking on-campus female bathrooms with tampons, pads and instructions for how to use them. For every 10 tampons and pads sold, Aunt Flow donates one to someone who needs these products.

According to George Tharp, a co-founder of Project Period, this student led organization wants to "provide free sanitary products for all members of our Saint Louis University community, and, in doing so, [they] plan to create a healthier, more-inclusive community." This mis-



Shanaya and I saw an issue and we knew that we needed to do everything that we could to make sure all members of our SLU community feel comfortable navigating through their days without the influences of stigma and shame.



sion is similar to that of Aunt Flow, which was created by a young woman who would get her periods unexpectedly in public without the proper supplies needed. Tharp, and their cofounder Shanaya Shah, became particularly motivated to address the lack of access to menstrual products after being approached by an anonymous student.

Tharp and Shah are SGA Senators who represent the College for Public Health and Social Justice. One of



flow

their constituents who commuted to campus everyday reached out to them and shared that she started menstruating unexpectedly before a class. This student, not having access to hygiene products on campus, had to leave from school early and go home to access the products that she needed.

Situations like these were common until Tharp and Shah sought change in their school community. This student “ended up opting out of class for the day and messaged us to suggest that menstrual products should be readily available in restrooms on campus. We don’t expect members of our community to carry around rolls of toilet paper in case they need to use the restroom, so why should we require students to carry around menstrual products?” says Tharp.

A difficulty in making Project Period a large-scale organization involved having conversations about menstrual equality with people who never experienced menstruation. There are challenges presented when attempting to convince non-menstruators that menstrual supplies are necessities. In 2017, Boston University found that just “46 percent of the 2,000 men it polled viewed access to affordable tampons and pads as a right, not a privilege.” Despite sweeping activism and changing attitudes around menstruation today, 40 states still tax tampons as non-necessities.

Project Period attempts to face the stigma of periods head on. As Tharp believes, “there is a deep-seated stigma associated with menstruation that permeates through systems of sexism. In regards to TGQN (Transgender, Genderqueer, Questioning and Non-conforming) or intersex [individuals], a deep-seated transphobia is to blame.”

People are quick to judge people that are different from them. This preconceived notion of different people leads to inequality that continues until there are powerful voices to stand up to the stigma.

Despite these stigmas, Project Period has been very successful in their mission. After providing SLU students access to free menstrual products for a year, Tharp and Shah hope to receive permanent funding to continue this project. With the aid of SGA’s Wellness

Grant and the support of many students, menstrual hygiene products have already been integrated into multiple female-assigned bathrooms throughout campus - and providing access in male bathrooms is on the horizon.

While planning the logistics for Project Period, Tharp and Shah considered putting the tampon and pad dispensers in male assigned restrooms to accommodate for transgender students. However, Custodial Services informed them last minute that they would not be able to install dispensers in male-assigned restrooms due to cost and needing “higher approval.” Tharp and Shah insisted on covering the costs; however, Custodial Services, genuinely needing higher approval, were not able to install the dispensers in male-assigned restrooms.

Putting dispensers in male-assigned restrooms has been a growing movement throughout college campuses in the nation. For example, the University of Wisconsin at Madison, the University of Minnesota-Twin Cities and Brown University are a few other institutions that provide free menstrual products in some men’s and gender-neutral restrooms in order to be more inclusive of TGQN and intersex students. This movement has stemmed from the growing “Free the Tampon” movement which aims to make college more open and less restrictive for students who menstruate.

Movements like these are just the beginning. This generation has the potential to make great changes towards gender inequality; it all starts passion and motivation. This movement is not merely at SLU but nationwide. Students all across the country are joining the “Free the Tampon” movement. Students from various colleges are raising money and awareness to free access to menstrual products in female and male assigned restroom, delineating to us that change is truly possible. As Tharp stated, “students have an incredible ability to create change at SLU. Anything is possible if you have a strong support network and a passion to better the world around you.”

Between Nothing and Everything:

How We Can All Make a Difference



Sarah Steen

Junior

English & American Studies

What does it mean to make a difference in the world? What does it mean to make a difference in a world that will tell you that nothing you do is enough? What about when you tell yourself that nothing you do is enough?

Paralysis. We live in a world of socially-conscious, yet paralyzed people. The world seems to move around us, spitting social issue after social issue and cause after cause at us, while spinning too fast for us to find our bearings. In other words, there seem to be so many things we should be doing for the endless issues we care about, that we eventually find ourselves feeling paralyzed and doing nothing—or, at least, close to nothing. We sink into the muddy mindset that we cannot make a meaningful difference because we will always fall short or completely sink into the quicksand trap.

Of course, these “us” and “we” and “I” statements do not apply to everyone. There are many young people who take this saturation of social and political issues and don’t let it overwhelm them. Instead, they find both “big” and “small” ways to tackle particular problems that matter to them with the acknowledgement that while they cannot change everything they would like to, they can nonetheless change something. I would never try to disregard the existence of these individuals; I actually want to emphasize that they are more existent than we might initially realize.

No, I use these “I”s because I am just as implicated in this discussion as the next “socially conscious,” social-justice-seeking soul who simply can’t seem to do enough. I feel overwhelmed by my vast passions and convictions, then galvanized by one thing, then another, and eventually, I’m back to being overwhelmed again without anything to show for myself—except a crippling feeling of dishevelment, disheartenment, and disillusionment with my own image of myself and my perceived ability to change things that need changing.

And I use the “we”s because studies have shown

it’s not just me that feels this way. This is a shared problem, a feeling that inches its way into many people’s lives. The Royal Society for the Encouragement of Arts, Manufactures and Commerce (RSA) published the findings of a study they conducted on the “motivation and perceived ability of young people to make a difference in their communities” in an article from August 13, 2018 called “Teenagency: How Young People Can Create a Better World.” In this study, they found that while 84 percent of young people polled wanted to help others, only 52 percent believed that they could make a positive difference in their communities.

I believe we live in a generation of people who are becoming increasingly aware, who are utilizing their endless resources to click and read and form a greater understanding of the world. I believe we live in a generation of people who genuinely want to change things for the better and who have the capability to do so. So, why do so many people feel they are incapable? Why do we think that small changes don’t matter? Why do we assume we must be perfect in our pursuits of social and political change—or simply in personal change, for that matter? Why do we allow ourselves to feel as if we have nothing to offer if we can’t offer everything?

Paul Loeb addresses this problem in multiple editions of an entire, full-length book titled *Soul of a Citizen: Living with Conviction in Challenging Times*, with his latest edition published in 2010. He spends 356 pages outlining this dilemma, discussing the problem with idolizing previous leaders in social movements, revealing the epidemic cynicism plaguing society today, and offering solutions that will foster a soul of a citizen within all of us. His argument is simple: “Whoever we are, and whatever paths we follow, we can all lead lives worthy of our convictions.”

Loeb emphasizes that we often think of our heroes and believe we would never have the ability to live up to

that kind of standard. We forget that all activists and people who make positive differences in the world have to start somewhere. He offers the example of Rosa Parks, who is often elevated to “superhero status” through her famous refusal to give up her bus seat and often given credit for largely initiating the civil rights movement. He asserts that this oversimplified image of Rosa Parks, and the civil rights movement as a whole, is dangerous because it “obscures the story’s most powerful lessons of hope—that when we begin to act on our beliefs, we set out on a journey whose rewards we can’t anticipate, that seemingly modest initial steps can lead to powerful results, and that any of us can contribute to bringing about change, in small or large ways.”

We all have the ability within ourselves to create change. But in order to harness this innate ability, we need to start reframing what “making a difference” or “making a change” means to us. The moment we find virtue in the small changes we make and find inspiration within these small changes to do more, rather than find frustration that causes us to do less, we will be able to restructure our notions of “change” and truly, successfully direct our passion and ability. If we can change the way we understand what it means to make a difference, we can start to see that it is much more common and “attainable” than we might have originally thought.

All around us, every day, there are people making important differences. Just look at SLU and what its students are doing on and off campus. We have seen Shanaya Shah and George Tharp fighting for a healthier, more inclusive community environment with their Period Project by bringing access to free menstrual products to campus; we have seen Devonn Thomas taking the initiative to hold SLU accountable by offering housing for those suffering from homelessness in the St. Louis community during sub-zero temperatures; we have seen Tori Lothian, Delanie Muenchen, and other students working with Gateway 180 Homeless Services, providing tutoring and companionship to the children at the shelter and working to beautify and update their space; we have seen Marissa Ornelas fighting for the rights of undocumented people, as close to home as on campus and as far as the Texan border. This list can go on and on. These people do not do what they do for themselves. They do not make change to feel fulfilled. And they often aren’t widely recognized because of it. But what they do is important and meaningful, and they undeniably make a difference.

As Grace Lee Boggs, the famous

activist who devoted over 70 years of her life to her activism, often said, “We are the leaders we’ve been looking for.” I see this in Shanaya, George, Devonn, Tori, Delanie, Marissa, and so many more. I also see it in the people who start simple conversations and enact simple changes—the people who may not even see themselves as making any kind of difference.

In a sense, many of us are very fortunate—in other words, privileged—that we have the option to remain “paralyzed” and not directly involve ourselves in issues that need addressing because, frankly, often they do not directly affect us. This paralysis, however discomfiting it may feel, can be a much more comfortable position to be in than one that involves making conscious changes, personally and socially. And it is absolutely a far more comfortable position to be in than one in which action is required. Many people simply do not have the choice of whether or not to seek and create change because their lives are directly affected and often put at risk by particular institutions or actions.

I have personally had to acknowledge and tackle and try to overcome my own “paralysis” in my place of privilege. As I have gradually come to terms with my own shortcomings and attempted to rise above them, I have learned that I have to change what activism and making a difference means to me. Becoming an activist doesn’t have an expiration date. It doesn’t have a set of rules you have to follow or a path you have to take.

Find it within yourself to reject the cynicism that lurks in the back of your mind. Yes, the world is incredibly unfair and unjust and, honestly, straight up discouraging. But succumbing to its inundating power and disarming ability to instill doubt and pessimism in your soul does not serve you and certainly does not serve society as a whole. Holding yourself to the absolute highest standard is pointless if you let it hinder you from reaching your own highest potential. Remind yourself that you have so much to offer the world, but you also can’t expect yourself to offer the world everything. You just have to start somewhere.

There is a commonly repeated phrase in the Jesuit tradition: go set the world on fire. But, if you need to, start with a flicker or a flame.

The Selfish are the Bravest:

Navigating the Divide Between Home and School



Lexi Kayser
Freshman
English & Journalism

I have spent the past six months attempting to live with a heart split in two, with a soul that aches to occupy more than one place, with legs that cement their achilles beneath me, yet lungs that can't stop breathing for a place far away.

I didn't expect college to feel like this.

I grew up with a spirit far too free for the confines of its hometown; every single day spent at a high school desk, learning about the Revolutionary War for the umpteenth time and listening to the same boys that I'd known since Kindergarten tell the same jokes that I'd understood since sixth grade, felt ridiculously debilitating. I wanted to be out there, talking about things that mattered more than prom mattered, intertwining with others that wanted more than what a nuclear family and a sedentary life had to offer them.

College was absolutely my dream. It combined my lust for freedom with my obsession for pushing my mind to new limits. I spent hours researching top-notch universities and soaking in images of "ivies." I was ready to go, and to go far, and to be one step closer to actually doing the things that I had dreamed about.

And then, we got the phone call that changed everything.

I fell to my knees that night and sunk lower than I even fathomed possible, banging my fists against the wall, sobbing so much that our entire house shook with raw grief.

My dad, my genius, wonderful, selfless father and best friend and confidant, was diagnosed with frontotemporal dementia. The illness was terminal. And the clock was ticking.

I had never felt so insufficient, so powerless, so hopelessly small as I did in the moment that I found out. And how could I have felt any other way? How could I feel any less than shattered? I was betrayed by divinities

that I didn't even believe in, hoping for miracles that every medical journal promised would not come, losing sleep to the steady pounding of a thought in my head, "we're losing time, we're losing him."

I was a girl with a dying father, and I was a girl with college applications to turn in. I don't have the adequate vocabulary to vocalize the psychological torture of that juxtaposition.

I didn't want to sacrifice my future, but I didn't want to live with the agonizing regret that would come from wasting our present. So I chose a school close to home, forty-five minutes away, and hoped that I could somehow manage to be a full time college student as well as a part time caregiver for my dying father and a support system for my grieving family.

The concept sounded easy enough, in theory, but in a cunning conflict of reality, it has been the most difficult thing that I have ever done. That is due largely in part to a feeling that I've termed "College Guilt."

Allow me to explain.

You're writing a philosophy paper about how we're all going to die, and then you remember that your father is, indeed, dying. You feel guilty because you are wasting your time knocking down a word count when you should be holding your dad's hand. College guilt.

You treat yourself to a night out with your friends, and then you remember that your mom is at home, cleaning bed sheets over and over and changing countless diapers because your father's end-stage incontinence has set in. You feel guilty because you're dancing and singing and, God forbid, smiling when you should be at home, doing something to lessen the burden on your loved ones. College guilt.

You get excited about your future after your meeting with your academic advisor, and then you remember that your dad won't be a part of it, and that he won't be

there when you get your diploma. You feel guilty, because how could you possibly be excited for a future that he doesn't get to be a part of? College guilt.

Your friends buzz with joy at the prospect of going abroad for a semester, and you ache to join them, but you're terrified about missing the last few months of his life, whenever those may fall. You feel guilty, because what sort of selfish person could even weigh the possibility of chasing their dreams when their dreams should involve their loved ones? College guilt.

And I'm not the only one.

It's she who watches the custody battle from four states away. It's he who can't make the cousin's funeral because of plane fare and a bio exam. It's they who wish that they could fold their younger siblings into their arms after the depression diagnosis and hold them until the pain dissipates into the minute space between their heads.

We can't be young and dumb forever. We have to be brave and bold right now. In a split second, we are forced to shoulder the burden of what feels like the entire sky. We have to grow up before we're ready for our youths to expire. And it's hard. And it hurts. But I think it's a pretty spectacular thing to do.

We are the unsung heroes of the millennial generation, wrestling with independence while concomitantly begging for forgiveness of our every mere want. We are single souls divided amongst multiple "homes," struggling with the concept of the word and apologizing for ever leaving in the first place. We are trying our best to be everything for everybody while simultaneously making something for ourselves. We have never felt so small. We have never felt so big.

And it's not like we had any choice; we didn't. We were thrust into these impossible scenarios and told to swim, even though there's no instruction manual on how to deal with these currents. We're in this blurry, fuzzy gray area, and there's absolutely no right way to navigate it. So we call, and we text, and we check in. And we write, and we study, and we caffeinate. And all the while, we feel sick, because we just might be doing it wrong. We're either failing our families or we're failing our future; how does one cope with that?

I try to visit home at least three or four times a month, between sorority events and newspaper deadlines and classes. Everytime that I leave, without fail, I sob on the way back to school, overwhelmed with the reality of what's fading in my rearview mirror. It's hard, but I'm learning. I'm learning how to let the guilt fade.

Just because my circumstances look different from other young adults, doesn't mean that my end product has to look different. I'm learning, in small steps, how to live my own life unapologetically--just like everyone else does. I'm learning that it's okay to foster the passions within me, no matter

how much responsibility I feel to abandon those passions to take care of others. It's certainly challenging to realize that the only thing we're ever guaranteed to have until the end of time is ourselves, but I don't think there's any lesson more vital. If this is the case, it only makes sense that we should devote our lives to our own self-betterment. Even if that means leaving behind our homes. Even if that means leaving behind our families. Even if that means leaving behind parts of our hearts because, deep down, we know that they'll grow back stronger.

I know who I am: smart, strong, spirited. I know that if I pour my energy and efforts into myself, I can and will do amazing things for the society that I live in. It's not selfish to choose your branches over your roots. It's intelligent. It's courageous. It's what you owe to the world.

I love my dad and my family and my home. That will never change nor fade. But I also love myself.

So I'm grieving and I'm studying. I'm remembering and I'm planning. I'm loving and I'm leaving.

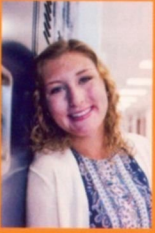
When I was little and I felt bad about missing soccer practice because I was sick, my dad would merely say, "you're the most important thing."

I finally understand.



IT'S NOT ABOUT ME... BUT IT KIND OF IS

The Impact of Voluntourism and Foreign Aid



Lexi Guffey
Freshman
Sociology

Instagram has become a diverse platform for social expression. We use it to share the highlights of our lives and stay up to date on our friends'. We spend time before class drafting captions for pictures from Mardi Gras, and scroll through our feed while in line at the airport for spring break. There's the classic beach pictures, friends who took a road trip to the Rockies, and ... a classmate posing with an African child. It might not seem too uncommon to see this public announcement of a short-term service trip; after all, they're encouraged by churches, pushed at school involvement fairs, and largely glorified by social media as people comment about generosity and donate thousands of dollars on Gofundme for airplane tickets. However, this westernized acceptance of short-term international service, or voluntourism, fails to account for the reality of its impact.

The voluntourism industry in America is rooted in the white savior complex -- a self-serving idea that white people from developed countries have the responsibility to travel to African or Central American countries and "save" poor individuals there. In practice, this plays out in a number of ways. College students or foreigners with minimal training or dedication go abroad to do short-term service

that locals could do more effectively, voluntourists exploit the lives, faces and stories of local people by photographing and sharing images without permission, and visitors

degrade countries through derogatory storytelling as they recall how "poor" or "uncivilized" a country is despite not understanding the culture.

The white savior complex is remarkably common and is deeply ingrained in American culture -- from movies featuring African people waiting for a white man to liberate them, to education featuring a Eurocentric curriculum, to foreign policy painting the United States as the savior of many war-torn regions. When issues like white saviorism are deeply ingrained into unconscious biases, counteracting them has to be constant and consciously considered in everyday decision making.

Even though white saviorism is most visible on social media, its effects reach farther than Instagram, and can even be deadly. The impact of white saviorism is exemplified in the story of

Renee Bach as recounted by the New Yorker. Renee was an 18 year old American missionary who moved to Uganda in 2010 with no college education or training and founded an organization called "Serving His Children". This nonprofit offered medical care to Ugandan children, often who were taken from established hospitals and medical centers.



Bach frequently updated her organization's website with blog posts detailing her involvement in medical care she had learned from YouTube, claiming she was "doing the work of God". There was no follow-up care given to these children, so it is unknown how many died as a result of care from this center, which was reported to Ugandan police and shut down five years after its opening.

Sadly, this idea that Americans can go to other countries and do service work they would not be qualified to do in the U.S. is not uncommon. As students and other travelers go abroad and teach classes, paint houses, give medical care, or build facilities, it is important to question whether they are the most qualified providers of these services. Often, the answer is no. Almost all of the work done by travelers can be done better by citizens of the country -- especially work done by short-term visitors, who often do not receive training or have a vested interest in the community. This turnover of short-term volunteers doing inconsistent work results in deficient projects that take work away from a citizen who could have been paid for the job. This, in turn, harms the economy of these countries and incites a cycle of dependence that is perpetuated by self-gratifying norms in Western countries.

The glorification of short-term service also fuels the notion that foreigners should raise thousands of dollars to do unnecessary work in another country when the country they are "serving" would benefit more from a donation. Even the idea of fundraising to do service and "experience" another culture or lifestyle incites a heated debate. Expanding one's worldview through travel and involvement in cultures outside one's own is an invaluable opportunity, but do cultures and situations of poverty exist so travelers can "experience" them? In short, there is no universal answer, but traveling, and especially doing service work, abroad requires thorough consideration and humility.

Despite the undeniably negative impact aid on a massive scale has on both the countries it provides to and the people who live there, this narrative is widely ignored. In America and other Western countries, international service is widely praised and often institutionalized. Our media is littered with images of starving children, feet with flies buzzing nearby, and propaganda we cannot help but feel the need to respond to. We hear about NGOs and businesses donating shoes, glasses, and food to underprivileged groups. We go to service events for churches to package meals for African children and think we are helping a continent we know nothing about.

However, these images, degrading narratives and self-serving initiatives do not share the full story of the impact aid has on the countries it "serves". The documentary Poverty Inc. touches on multiple examples of the devastating impact aid has on the economy in developing

countries, one of the most recognizable being Haiti. In the 1980's, Haiti was self-sufficient in rice, which people there consumed 2 to 3 times per week. It was viewed as a luxury item, and was supplemented by a balanced nutritional system of other foods produced by local farmers. When the U.S. flooded the Haitian market with subsidized rice, it was so cheap that it not only became a staple of the Haitian diet in every meal, it also put almost every Haitian farmer out of business. This caused the farmers to have to sell their land and move to the cities without jobs, resulting in overcrowding slums built along a fault line. Support of these aid-bearing organizations is generally not done with malicious intent, but results in the perpetuation of poverty on a massive scale. In this case, it exacerbated the impacts of the Haitian earthquake both in the number of people affected and in the built reliance on the aid that flooded the country after the earthquake occurred. Disaster relief for situations such as this is important, but when it causes an entirely dependent economy, the aid in itself creates a disaster there is no relief from.

The impact of large-scale international aid on the economies of the countries it aims to "support" is not coincidental, and results in the perpetuation of the ideas we attribute to voluntourism and white saviorism. Overlooking the needs of communities is a chronic and systemic issue that begins in the missions of international aid organizations and, in turn, personifies in groups doing short term service. This tendency to overpower needs of the local community with short term pleasantries actively works against long term humanitarian aid and self improvement programs.

Jessica Trout, SLU's advocacy coordinator in the Center for Service and Community Engagement experienced this directly while working with a service group in Nicaragua. Her group sought to empower the local communities through long-term public health education

"We go to service events for churches to package meals for African children and think we are helping a continent we know nothing about."

and resources to elevate themselves out of poverty in the form of self-help workshops. In this country, a frequent interference came in the form of mission groups, who "would come in the same day as a workshop and even though they would give out toothbrushes and personal hygiene products with information at the workshops, the mission groups would come and give candy and toys.

People wouldn't go to the workshops, which caused the mission groups to actually work against what the workshops were doing," Trout said.

These groups also tend to participate in social media exploitation, which constructs a harmful narrative for the countries involved. When people post selfies or pictures that use African children like props, or portray them in compromising situations, such as in hospitals, this contributes to the Westernized idea that African children are nameless and need to be saved. In addition, it marks poverty as a tourist attraction for Americans to "learn from", and creates a harmful dichotomy between "beautiful" and "wealthy" Western locations like America or Europe and "poor" or "tragic" African or Latin American countries.

This is part of a larger trend in the media. People in poverty are taken out of their own stories, forcing them to become nameless, powerless objects of their situation for Western industries to throw aid at without an active attempt to help them rise out of poverty. These people have the ability to elevate themselves out of poverty - but only with access to specific rights, including legal protection, justice in the courts, the ability to title their land, the freedom to start a business, and links to International trade. This is missing in many parts of the developing world, and the poverty aid industry incentivises companies and nonprofits to avoid creating these systems as most organizations that come into a country do not work for the country, they work for the aid establishment. If local communities rise out of poverty, and the country rises out of its status as "developing", the international aid industry is no longer necessary. This raises the question: who actually benefits from foreign aid?

Charitable initiatives that are done without careful analysis of the long-term effects they will produce actively hurts the economies and increases poverty levels of the countries subject to it. This is seen in examples such as Haiti, in Kenya's textile industry disintegrating when clothing donations flooded the country and in countless others. These welfare systems are inherently different than aid programs in Western countries. In America, welfare is in the form of temporary aid with the expectation that those receiving it will be able to rise out of their situations. When western countries create this industry that functions off of people in developing countries staying in poverty, we are implying that they are inferior to those residing in "developed" countries.

The documentary Poverty Inc. also tells the story of an American family who moved to Haiti with the initial goal of starting an orphanage; although, upon arriving in the country, they learned about an oft-ignored issue faced by Haitian orphanages: orphanage tourism. People and groups from Western countries tend to want

“ Before going abroad, the most important thing is to *understand* Understand savior complex, understand privilege. *Be humble, and be willing to learn.* ”

to visit orphanages in developing countries, but there aren't enough orphans to fill that need. This results in over 80% of the children in orphanages being poverty orphans, or children who live in orphanages because their parents couldn't afford to care for them. Instead of feeding into this inhumane practice, the couple looked for a way to address the root of the problem and founded a jewelry making business that allowed Haitians to create a product to be sold internationally while earning an income from their labor. This initiative simply provided connections and a platform for work, and in turn allowed Haitians to be self-sufficient instead of receiving inconsistent hand-outs. It also highlights a key fallacy within the current aid industry: the idea that those in need are incapable of providing for themselves. Contrary to that notion, those in poverty, especially in developing countries, are often not living that way for lack of motivation, but for lack of opportunity.

While the intentions of most people going on short-term service abroad isn't to cause harm, once the unintended consequences of volun-tourism is brought to light, it becomes a responsibility to absorb information and begin to approach service differently. Participating in service abroad requires walking along a precarious line between helping communities and causing harm. There is no surefire way to never do harm abroad, as there is no way to fully understand another culture and what will

help the people in it without any Western bias. Engaging in an open dialogue with local representatives before doing any service work is imperative. Keeping a connection with local people will allow service to cater to the needs of the community instead of to the desire of the volunteer.

This may seem out of reach for a college student looking to do a semester abroad, but there are numerous organizations that do long-term service in countries in need that strive to keep locals in the conversation and do necessary work, even on SLU's campus. Before going with any of these groups, do research. Make sure to know about their mission, their history, their community involvement, their impact, and what your own will be. Be sure to embrace the concept of mindfulness, whether it be in discretion over what photos you post and whether they are self-serving, your attitude toward the culture of other countries, or the values you embody.

"Before going abroad, the most important thing is to understand. Understand savior complex, understand privilege. Be humble, and

be willing to learn," Jessica Trout said. When embarking on these trips, another

important facet to understand is the narrative created on social media. Creating an internet perspective of a trip or service mission should not be done lightly. Be sure to carefully question whether any posts are self serving, compromising to any native people, or pigeonhole a country into being a poverty-stricken, desolate place. Instead of posting selfies with strangers, choose instead to showcase the beauty of other countries in the same way people would on a trip to a Western European destination. The influence and impact of a degrading narrative is harmful to the country it reflects, and fuels ideas of white saviorism. Like service in local communities, service abroad is not supposed to be self-serving, but images of "self sacrifice" or "generosity" say the opposite.

Doing service abroad is not the only option; however, local service should not come without serious consideration. Local service can be mutually beneficial to get involved in, but short-term service in any capacity - international or local - has a huge potential to be done wrong, even with good intentions and thorough consideration. St. Louis has countless organizations that offer opportunities for long-term involvement through SLU's Center for Service and Community Engagement. These organizations offer the chance to positively impact the community if done with commitment and humility.

Service has existed as a vessel for white superiority for decades, allowing even those with the best intentions to play into systems of oppression. Deconstructing this narrative begins with understanding and committing to the process of redefining the Western idea of international aid.

- *Jessica Trout,*

SLU Center for Service
& Community Engagement

INSTEAD OF:

Posting pictures
with children

Immediately signing
up for service

Following what you
think is best

Going abroad to
do service

TRY:

Showcasing the
country's natural
beauty

Doing thorough
research first

Talking to local
representatives

Looking into local
service opportunities
that actively avoid
causing harm

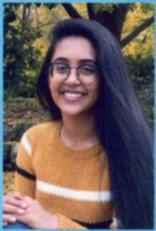


Hope for the



Homeless:

Using Policy to Make Progress



Dhvanii Raval
Freshman
Neuroscience

Homelessness wasn't something that I really thought about, until I was sitting next to a homeless man on a sub-zero winter night as he choked back tears telling me about his worries. After the recent cuts Trump made to the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP), he didn't know where or when his next meal would be. Sitting there made me realize two very important things; homelessness is a huge issue that affects real people every day, and comforting one man, one night was not going to provide relief to him-- or the millions of others like him across the nation. While providing him a hot meal and support one night was impactful, it put a bandage on a bullet wound. Real, large-scale change comes from advocacy for people who don't have the social capital to advocate for themselves. Policy initiatives like SNAP are what can change his situation permanently, can relieve his worry of where to find food night after night.

While service enables people to connect with societal problems and empathize with the marginalized populations that go through them, it's important to

remember that service is just a starting point. However, there seems to be fundamental disconnect between our service and our policy involvement. If we truly care about these goals of service, there are much bigger, better and more effective ways to help these people. We can only truly help through policy involvement.

For example, I am a tutor through Overground Railroad to Literacy, an organization that partners with inner-city schools to provide supplement education to students in underprivileged districts. Through Overground, I've witnessed first-hand the troubled background students in these schools come from and the educational and racial disparities systematically embedded in the school systems. And even though being a constant mentor for one student would benefit that specific student, the problems they face are much larger than something Overground can even make a dent in fixing. I'm not saying that Overground's efforts are futile, but the organization cannot erase endemic issues alone. There needs to be statewide education reform that levels the playing

field for children in lower-income situations so they can get out of the cycle of poverty. More funding allocated to schools, trauma training for educators and further racial integration of schools are all initiatives that would have a much bigger magnitude than tutoring alone. Students can join initiatives that fight for state or federal educational reform, or any policy reform that regards something they care about.

We're young people who care about the world around us, but we need to take steps to make an impact beyond just a few people. Certain policy may not directly affect you or I, but it affects the homeless people on Saint Louis streets, and it affects the children in the schools we tutor at. We need to get involved politically to not only help the people we do service for but millions of others like them that suffer because of their circumstances. Policy changes are something that can only be achieved if people rally together to advocate for that change, and

there are a multitude of ways students can get involved.

These organizations and many more like them across Saint Louis create change in the lives of people across Missouri-- change that is sustainable and has a great magnitude. Getting involved politically helps systematically change the way society functions and greatly impacts the lives of the underprivileged. Students can and should be part of that change. And together, we can create a society where people don't have to sit on the curb and worry about their next meal.

Here are three Saint Louis initiatives that coincide with the service you might already be doing:

1. With Trump's recent defunding of Planned Parenthood (as reported by the New York Times), hundreds of women across the state of Missouri won't have access to women's sexual and reproductive health resources. Planned Parenthood Saint Louis has a program where students can intern with their public policy team or volunteer on their outreach team to urge Missouri lawmakers to fund access to resources for women.

2. With Missouri's current healthcare laws, thousands of uninsured, low-income constituents are unable to access necessary healthcare. Missouri Healthcare for All lobbies to provide universal healthcare in the state and writes legislation to propose to the state government. They have a "Policy Pod" on SLU's campus where students can discuss current policy, brainstorm legislation and join in on lobbying for the cause. Anyone interested in the cause can join the Policy Pod.

3. Family Court of Saint Louis is an organization that represents children with juvenile delinquencies in court, with a majority of these children being racial minorities. With their advocacy, they work to reduce the incarceration of African American teens. The organization has a program where students can volunteer to can assist on case management and lobbying efforts.



Planned Parenthood*
Care. No matter what.



**Missouri
Health Care
for All**

**FAMILY COURT
OF SAINT LOUIS**

The Effects of Juvenile Disenfranchisement



Ava Gagner
Freshman
Sociology

Youth in this country are being denied their rights everyday, including their right to vote, their future right to vote and their right to representation. They are also suffering the negative consequences of incarceration, especially when unfairly tried as adults. This tragedy is evident in the story of Cyntoia Brown, who was a sixteen year old girl charged with the murder of Johnny Mitchell Allen. When Brown was 16 she was forced into sex-trafficking by a pimp named Kut-Throat. She was repeatedly drugged and raped for days until she was purchased by 46 year old Allen for sex. In an act of self defense, she shot and killed him. After admitting to the murder, the court ruled that it was not an act of self defense, but a robbery since Brown took his wallet after killing him. Brown later said that she was afraid for her life and only took the money so she didn't have to return empty handed to her pimp. Despite this, she was tried as an adult at 16 and was sentenced to life in prison and would not have a chance for parole until she was fifty-one. Brown was granted clemency after multiple celebrities, a congressman and her state legislators spoke out about this injustice. Her sentence has now been reduced to 15 years and she is scheduled to be released on August, 7, 2019. This is an important example of how young people's rights can be violated and they can be left feeling--and truly--powerless. The judicial system in the United States is hard to navigate no matter your age, but is especially so if you are young and relatively powerless.

Unfortunately, youth in this country are denied their rights everyday--and not just in the extreme case of murder. In our schools, students suffer the consequences of zero tolerance policies which have created an infamous school-to-prison pipeline. An example of this is the case of Kiera Wilmot, a sixteen year old African American honors student who was expelled after conducting an unapproved science experiment. No one was harmed during the experiment and all that resulted was a popping sound and a small amount of smoke. This did not stop the school from calling the authorities who arrested and removed her from school property and charged her with discharging a firearm. Luckily for Wilmot, the charges ended up being dropped, but it is easy to see how schools can take a minor incident and turn it into something major. The zero tolerance policies that many schools adopt regularly suspend, expel and

refer youth to the justice system without ever considering the severity or the circumstances of the given incident.

Once tried in the court system, the rights of youth in this country are further denied by an inability to vote. If youth are processed in juvenile courts, they retain their right to vote once they turn 18 even if they are still serving time in juvenile facilities for offenses tried as a juvenile. Those under 18 have no opportunity to vote while in juvenile facilities, but youth who turn 18 and remain in juvenile facilities still retain that right. However, most of this population is not given the chance to register to vote or obtain an absentee ballot. Ideally, juvenile detention centers are supposed to give youth in the system a chance at rehabilitation. Youth are considered to have a greater capacity to change than adults, and are provided with supervision, guidance and education in the juvenile system. But when the potential young voters who are in these facilities are denied their right to vote, they are being denied their chance to participate in the political process.

In many instances, youth lose their right to vote before they are even old enough to cast a ballot. In a 2019, the National Juvenile Justice Network estimated that each year 250,000 children under the age of 18 are incarcerated as adults. Being tried as an adult when under the age of 18 is an unfortunately common occurrence in this country: These convicts' age prevents them from voting and, when compounded with their judicial status, can permanently disenfranchise them in many states. This keeps incarcerated youth further disenfranchised and affects minorities even more drastically.

In an article on youth tried as adults, The Root reports that in Missouri in 2017, 75% of youth that were tried as adults were African American. Minorities, especially African American and Native American youth, are overrepresented in both the juvenile and adult system while white youth are underrepresented.

This discrimination also occurs at our border, where some kids have not been given their right to a lawyer. Migrant children are appearing in court to fight for their right to stay in the country, and some as young as three have had to defend themselves against deportation. The process is supposed to give kids the chance to seek protection in the U.S., but

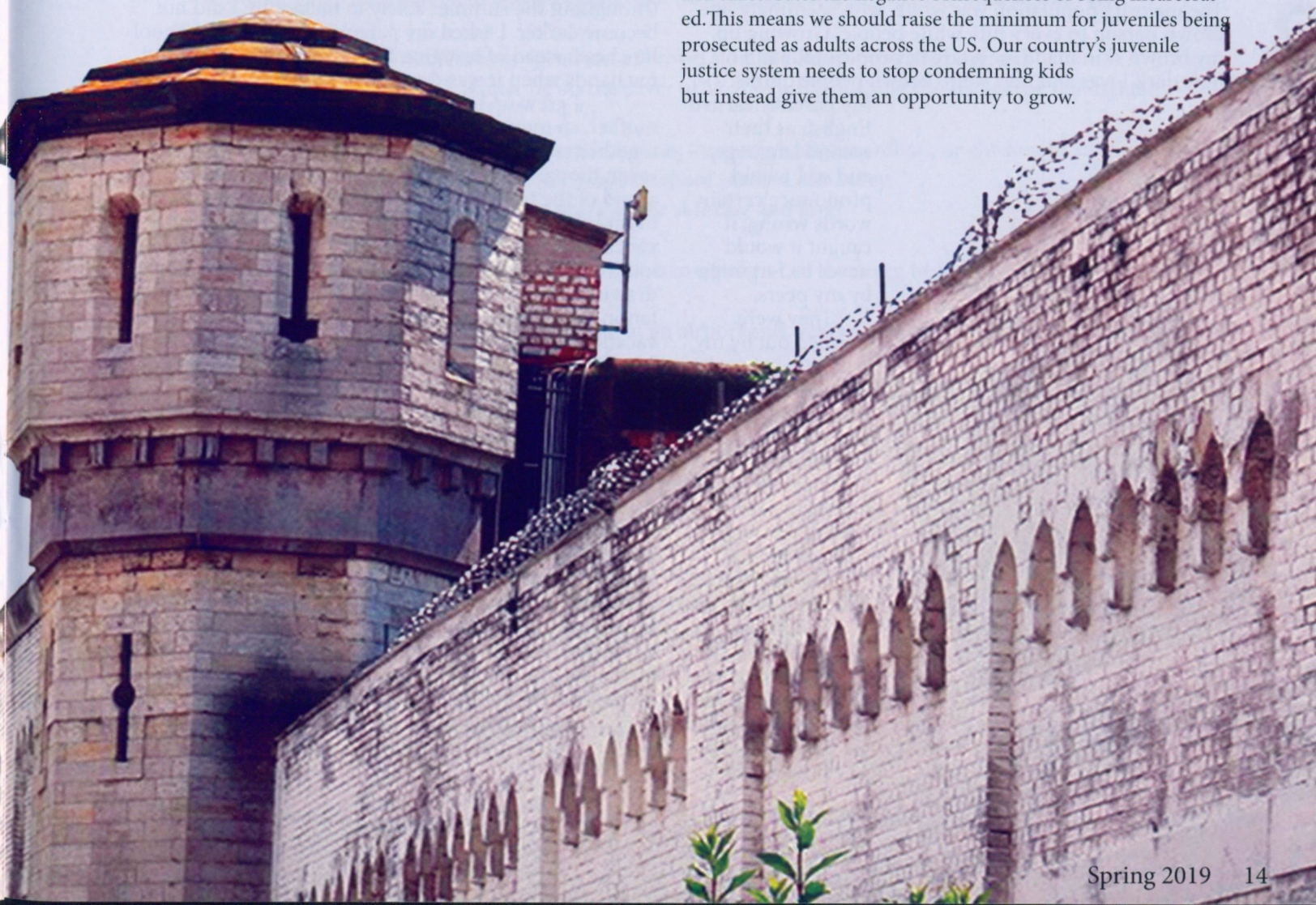
immigration attorney Lenni Benson says “the system is daunting even for well-trained lawyers, let alone for the children themselves.” However, federal judge Jack Weil has said that he believes a three year old can learn how to defend themselves in court saying, “I’ve taught immigration law literally to 3-year-olds and 4-year-olds. It takes a lot of time. It takes a lot of patience. They get it. It’s not the most efficient, but it can be done.” This has not proven to be successful, as children who appear in immigration court without a lawyer are allowed to remain in the country less than 10% of the time.

Youth in juvenile facilities face serious long and short term consequences from incarceration. While serving time, young individuals are especially vulnerable to experience negative mental and physical health outcomes. This is especially true for those who have been put in solitary confinement. The ethics of this punishment have been questioned in the adult justice system but despite this, it is still practiced in juvenile facilities across the country. The consequences of social and physical isolation are greater in children because they are still maturing. In American Civil Liberties Union’s 2012 report “Growing Up Locked Down,” they found that these consequences can include prevented education, not enough exercise, losing touch with reality, self harm and in some cases suicide. Practices of solitary confinement can be detrimental to young people’s chance at rehabilitation. The consequences continue for incarcerated youth after serving time.

People who were incarcerated as juveniles are more likely to suffer physical and mental ramifications when compared to adults who never spent time in a detention center. They are more likely to suffer from symptoms of depression,

have suicidal thoughts and encounter risk factors for HIV and AIDS. Youth who were tried as adults are even more likely to suffer these negative consequences compared to those who were tried as juveniles. While in adult prisons, youth are at an extreme risk for sexual victimization compared to youth in juvenile facilities. There are also less available rehabilitation services, including mental health and education resources. This can be very damaging for individuals once they are out of prison. Youth who were housed in an adult facility are thirty-six times more likely to commit suicide than those in juvenile facilities, and they are also thirty-four percent more likely to be re-arrested.

In order to better protect children, we need to have greater understanding of youth’s rights. Children need to be fairly represented in courts, schools and detention centers. No child should have to represent themselves in immigration court at our borders, and should have appointed counsel regardless of economic status. Schools should enact policies that consider the severity of the incidences that occur instead of harsh zero tolerance policies. Juvenile detention facilities need to promote rehabilitation by eliminating practices that are detrimental to the well-being and education of young people, such as solitary confinement. Our prisons and juvenile facilities need to expand their mental health programs and educational opportunities. Youth in these facilities also should be encouraged to engage in the political process and know their rights. Youth who are 18 should be provided with ample opportunities to register to vote and obtain absentee ballots. We also need to stop trying children as adults because this disproportionately affects minorities and exacerbates the negative consequences of being incarcerated. This means we should raise the minimum for juveniles being prosecuted as adults across the US. Our country’s juvenile justice system needs to stop condemning kids but instead give them an opportunity to grow.



Cultural Appropriation is Not Your Coachella Trend



Amasil Fahim
Sophomore
Neuroscience

Growing up brown in a midwestern town, I was always in the minority. My parents were immigrants, coming from families thriving within brown culture. However, they ended up in a corn and wheatfield town. The majority population was white, with seemingly one brown person to every fifty white people. Growing up, my brown skin made me a target; people made fun of how dark I was and my “weird brown people quirks.”

My parents learned English as their second language, and so I would pronounce certain words wrong; if caught it would never be forgotten by my peers.

They were weirded out by my aromatic cultural lunches and asked why I didn't have Lunchables, like everybody else. Whenever holidays came about I would put beautiful red mehndi on my hands, but I only had my peers question why I would take a brown marker and draw on my skin. My brown skin

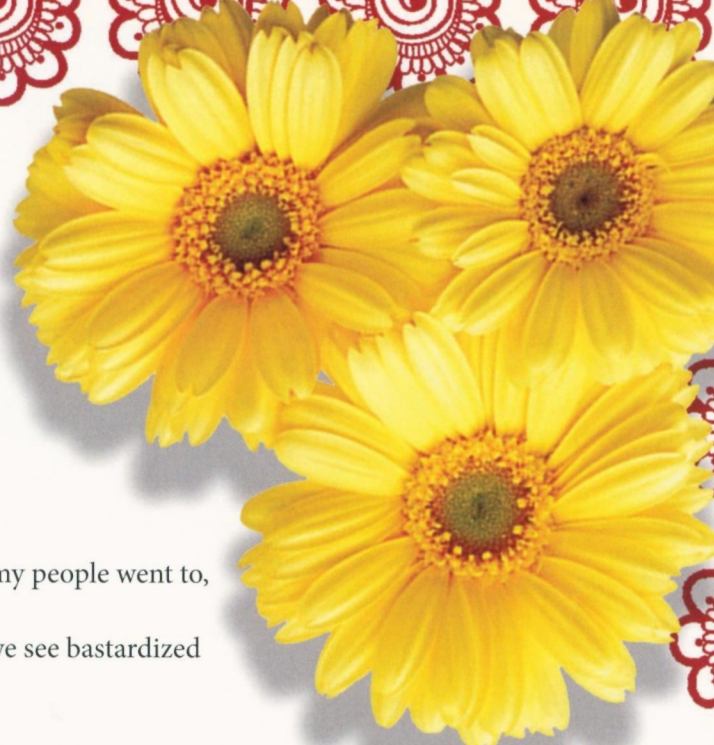
caused my peers to associate many different events with me: every year on 9/11 when we discussed the tragedy in class, all eyes were on me. This caused me to grow up scared and not proud of my skin. I would stay inside throughout the summer solely to make sure I did not become darker. I asked my parents to let me buy school lunches instead of bringing them from home and I hid my hands when it was the holiday season.

I grew up being shades darker than my fair mother, so much so that whenever we were in a room together, people didn't believe that I was her daughter—even though we were always together. I grew up being afraid of the brownness of my skin and my culture, only to find out in middle and high school that my precious yet criticized culture had become a fad, a new fashion trend. The same girls who had made fun of me for drawing on my hands were now showing off the “henna tattoo” designs they had gotten during their tropical vacation. Coffee shops were selling beverages called “chai tea lattes,” not knowing that the word chai literally means tea.

European standards of beauty have become so prevalent that instead of seeing people that look like me, I see Kendall Jenner on the cover of VOGUE India and Naomi Scott playing Jasmine in the live action Aladdin. After growing up afraid to represent a culture so vibrant and beautiful, brown girls like me are seeing ourselves and our culture being whitewashed. This needs to stop. When I think of my culture, I should not think about my adolescent insecurities surrounding it. Rather, I should think about my current self: a proud desi girl who loves her brown skin and vibrant culture. Fellow brown desis be the person you were scared to be when you were young and be proud of everything that comes with this beautiful culture of ours.



#unfair-and-lovely



We live in a world bustling with culture.
So many different lives encompassing so many different traditions.
Like me,
A brown Desi girl who loves the centuries worth of traditions and beliefs before me.
I want people to know about my culture.
I want them to see the beauty in my mehndi, my traditional garb, my aromatic food leaving a spice in one's mouth for days.
However, I need them to respect the years and struggles my people went to, to create this thriving culture.
I need them to realize the pain us POC youth feel when we see bastardized versions of the traditions we grew up with.
The traditions we were bullied for until it became trendy.
Did you know that mehndi is a traditional makeup used for celebrations such as weddings and religious holidays.
No, but you were quick to show off the chemical filled infinity sign you got during your beach trip in Florida.
Do you understand the time and effort it takes to design and choose the perfect fabric for our lehengas, saris, and shalwar kameez.
No, instead you wrap yourself in bed sheets and put on a red marker bindi to go to your halloween party.
Do you appreciate the beauty of our spectrum of brown skin and know brown is beautiful.
No, instead you have Kendall Jenner be on the cover of Vogue India, pushing the stereotype that lighter skin is better.
Do you know that hundreds of spices go into making the perfect biryani, nihari, or chicken tikka.
No, you just complained that my lunch in middle school smelled like curry.
Turmeric has been used for hundreds of years in our skincare and food.
It's not the the 'new' trend to put in face masks.
So many of my sisters wear head scarves and you're so quick to call them egg heads, terrorists, or ask where their hair went.
But the moment a white actress goes incognito at an airport and wears a headscarf, you claim that they are the peak of high fashion.
You need to do better.
You need to realize the harm you are doing to young brown girls.
We spend our youths leaving home excited to show our friends things commonplace in our household, only to be deemed weird and asked why we would ever do that.
You make us scared to be proud to represent our culture.
I was deemed brave to wear a lehenga and tikka to my prom.
My parents were scared to let me wear mehndi to college orientation, because it was a PWI.
Yet when I got there white girls were showing off the designs they got done on their cruise vacation.
We shouldn't be scared to embrace the culture you appropriate.
Our culture is not your costume.
Our culture is not your Coachella trend.
Our culture is not your music video theme.
Our culture is not your fad.

SKIPPING COLLEGE AND WHAT IT MEANS



Jessica Henn
Freshman
Finance

The academic goals of most American teenagers go like this: go to high school, get good grades, go to college. Why? Because today's society places an enormous emphasis on getting a college degree: Millions of students spend enormous sums of money because they are led to believe that the only way to get a high paying job is to go to college. *The perceived superiority of college needs to be denormalized so that anyone considering their future education can make a choice that will be most beneficial to them financially and personally.*

It is impossible to generalize the reasons people choose higher education. Some people go to college to enter a career, some because they are the first in their family able to do so and others because they never thought to do anything else. Today, the mentality of American society points toward an emphasis on pursuing a higher education, even for careers that do not necessarily require one. For most teenagers, college is not just a goal; it's a expectation tethered to the implication that if one does not go to college, it will be impossible to get a job or be successful. I, along with many others, experienced this pressure firsthand. For me, college started as an expectation held not only by my parents and high school, but, by extension, myself. I went to a private school in Cincinnati, Ohio, where students were expected to aim their studies at STEM or business fields with the goal of going to the most prestigious university they could with as much scholarship as possible. On the school's academic profile, it proudly states that 100% of graduates continue on to college. **It was implied that anything less was failure,** and that other options were inferior.

It wasn't until my junior year of high school that I began facing the realities of attending college; the financial aspects being the most daunting. I soon found myself researching student loans and payment options. My parents, small business owners who had experienced major economic recessions, taught me at a young age to be aware of money and the value of everything. It should not have been surprising, therefore, when I began applying these values to my college decision: I wondered if a college education was worth the thousands of dollars and emotional strain it would cost.

In the early years of high school, it was easy to push the responsibilities of making decisions about my future onto

a later date. But with my graduation rapidly approaching, I was faced with the question that every teenager fears: "what do you want to do with your life?" Up until this point, "I'm not sure" or "yikes, that's a scary question" were acceptable answers. But with only a year and a half to go until I had to make a concrete decision about my future, uncertainty and fear were disappearing as options.

I was terrified. I knew my family and friends were asking valid questions--questions I felt I should have answered already--but I couldn't bring myself to commit to anything. I was afraid of making the wrong choice; of risking embarrassment. I hid behind my non-committal answers in the hopes that if I pretended like time wasn't always moving forward, the need to make a decision would never come. But, as a 16 year old, my family and teachers wanted serious, certain answers from me and I was terrified. I was afraid of making the wrong choice and I was afraid of spending literally thousands of dollars on something I wasn't sure about.

Despite my uncertainty, I was always pushed towards getting a college education. I was familiar with the phenomenon that someone with a college degree, no matter how obscure or seemingly useless, was perceived as more respected than someone who had not completed higher education. This has been the world that my parents, high school and even college have emphasised. If those working without a degree in a technical job seem to earn less respect than to college-educated individuals, then why wouldn't a high school graduate feel pressured to pursue a degree? Even if they are not sure it is the right path for them? This is the problem with a college-centric mindset: It encourages the idea that anything less than a diploma is an underachievement.

With the irrefutable value of a college degree, college has never been more expensive and there have never been more ways to borrow money to pay for it. According to the College

Board, 34% of all aid awarded to students takes the form of student loans. Because of the high amount of loans offered and needed, the likelihood of students taking out loans has increased drastically over the years. This inclines students to get a degree that is not only perceived as useful, but also one where one can easily and quickly pay off those loans. According to CNBC News, over 44 million Americans are collectively hold \$1.5 trillion in student debt averaging about \$37,172 per borrower. We are so eager to get that higher degree - yet we do it without even considering other, oftentimes cheaper alternatives to college.

There are lesser known options that are more accessible and more lucrative than most would think, and their lack of



resulting debt makes them worth exploring.

There are four main post high school options for careers and each should be considered carefully and as a valid option; college, trade school, apprenticeships and the military. College is the first option many consider. In 2016, seventy percent of high school graduates enrolled in college, according to the National Center for Education Statistics (NCES). While this high number might give the impression that there are more people with college degrees, it is misleading. Fox Business can even be cited saying fifty-one percent of college students drop out due to financial reasons, including not being able to balance maintaining a job to pay for school or being able to find a co-signer for private loans. While many employers now require Bachelor's degrees, college is becoming more and more financially inaccessible. Many students commit to student loans and tuition costs that they have no reliable way of paying off. But now, a Bachelor's might not even be enough.

Many jobs that once required only a Bachelor's - or even an Associate's - degree have adjusted to the increased saturation of a college educated population, and now require an additional graduate degree. This practice, dubbed "Master's is the new Bachelor's" by the New York Times, devalues a 4-year degrees and subsequently increases the financial burden of those trying to pay for two degrees. The growing amount of time it takes to complete a valuable college degree, paired with the extensive costs of said degree, is making college a less financially practical option to the increasing number of graduating high schoolers.

So, what are alternatives to college? The first and most common is trade school. Jobs such as computer programing, air traffic control and energy engineers can make anywhere from \$80,000-\$120,000 a year without a costly four year degree. Instead, students combine practical experience with classroom learning. This specific curriculum allows you to graduate faster and enter into the workforce at a younger age, therefore gaining more experience and giving you more time to establish credibility. Many trades are also in high demand, as they are a more specialized skill with a smaller pool of people to draw from. This high demand leads to higher pay and better job opportunities. There is a deficit of people in specialized fields when the majority--seventy percent--of high schoolers are now choosing to go to college. It is important to consider, however, that a trade school degree is more specialized and therefore less flexible and universal than a four year degree.

The next alternative is entering into an apprenticeship which, despite popular belief, does not only belong in Medieval Ages. Apprenticeships today are less "master and student" and are more like paid internships. This method of study is very similar to trade school but instead of learning a trade in a school-like setting, you learn on the job with a company or business and through first-hand experience. This is an incredible way to ensure job security--for both employees and employers. Apprenticeships allow companies to personally train individuals for jobs tailored to their needs, and therefore they can rely on employees just as much as employees rely on them. Jobs stemming from apprenticeships might not pay as well as jobs obtained from a college degree right away but, in the long run, you are starting your career earlier with no college debt, which is a huge advantage in regard to saving money and gaining experience.

The last major option is joining the military. This, like any option, has many downsides as well as upsides. One upside is the option for individuals to enter into a military academy that comes with a free college education, guaranteeing a stable

career. Students can also join an ROTC program, where the military pays for their college education in return for a certain number of years of military service. These options provide free a college education and job experience with many connections. If you decide to leave the military after your service, you face a delayed beginning in the career you wish to pursue. Another very important consideration is any danger you encounter while serving. Once you sign and enter the military, you are committed and whichever branch you sign to can make major life decisions on your behalf.

These are just some of the alternatives to a college education, and with new careers such as Instagram influencers, online entrepreneurs and freelance artists, more options are emerging everyday. Not everyone has the knowledge of multiple options like I did when making the college decision. Realizing that the current job market frequently demands higher education for even unskilled jobs is important. But, realizing that alternative to college are just as worthwhile and necessary is also important. Knowing that college cannot--nor should not--be eliminated is a critical. A diverse range of options and pool of careers is essential to making the best possible choice when deciding on a future financial path.

The perceived superiority of college needs to be denormalized so that anyone considering their future education can make a choice that will be most beneficial to them financially and personally.

Overall, going to college is not a bad thing. Higher education is a valuable asset and should be available to everyone who wants to pursue it. We need people like nurses, paralegals and professors to have a higher education in order to do their jobs. However, there needs to be a line between what path is expected and perceived as superior, and what is best for personal and financial needs. All forms of work are essential to the betterment of society. There are many forms of work that do not require a college degree and yet are essential to our way of life. **No level of education should be looked down upon; no job should be seen as lesser.** We as a society need to encourage the pursuit of success, not of a single, expected option.

In the end, I did decide on pursuing a higher education. But **I made it into a choice, not an expectation.** I knew the other paths I could take and I chose this one. There are so many people, however, that choose a college education without knowing their options. Such a major decision concerning the future must be well thought out; considered from all possible angles. In order to denormalize the college expectation, all the options available need to be normalized. Each path needs to be respected for the value it has. All options have both drawbacks and advantages, but college should not be the default option when considering options for one's future.



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OUR MISSION

We are already one, but imagine that we are not. OneWorld exists to rediscover that, while we are many in our cultures, religions and struggles, we are one in our common humanity. We yearn to remove the barriers of ignorance and injustice because the most basic and unchanging truth that unites us is the infinite value of the human person. OneWorld emphasizes this unity by raising awareness of social injustice, inspiring action and transforming our hearts, minds and society

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STUDENT
DEVELOPMENT

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